

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 11 December 1952

SUBJECT Shortages of Raw Materials and of Tank Cars

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1. At the end of 1951 and the beginning of 1952, the following raw materials were in short supply in Czechoslovakia:

- a. Active soot (aktiver Rüss). In 1951 and early 1952 the Czechoslovak Chemical Works were feverishly attempting to obtain active soot on the international market through their representative, Chemapol. An order for 50 tons of the soot was accompanied by instructions to purchase the material at any price and in any currency, including U.S. dollars. Active soot is used in the production of explosives and gunpowder. The chief producer in Europe is reportedly the Deutsche Gold - und Silberscheideanstalt (Degussa) in Frankfurt am Main.
- b. Brightstock. A substance added to improve the quality of lubricating oils used in jet engines, other aircraft engines and heavy motors. Great Britain and the United States seem to be the main producers.
- c. Tetraethyl lead. Essential for the production of high octane gasoline for aircraft engines. Tetraethyl lead is not produced in Czechoslovakia at all and must be imported.
- d. Alfa cellulose. Used in the production of cellulose, and very scarce in Czechoslovakia. The main suppliers have been Austria and Scandinavia.
- e. Newsprint. Although the Czechoslovak paper industry is operating at full capacity, it cannot supply the country's demand for newsprint. In the past, Austria has supplied some of the newsprint on a barter basis.

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f. Sawdust. In demand, since it is a basic raw material for the production of synthetic resins.

2. There is an acute shortage of tank cars in Czechoslovakia because many refineries are forced to use them as temporary storage tanks. At the Stalin Works in Zaluzi near Most (N51/F62), about 400 tank cars are standing in the yards loaded with 800 tons of gasoline from Austria merely because the refinery does not have adequate storage facilities. Only 32 carloads can be processed daily at the refinery. The Czechoslovak Railways (CSD) were leased 100 tank cars for 1952 by the West German Federal Republic (Bonn). Dr. Blatone Ladavac, former Chemapol representative in Northern Italy, negotiated the loan.

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